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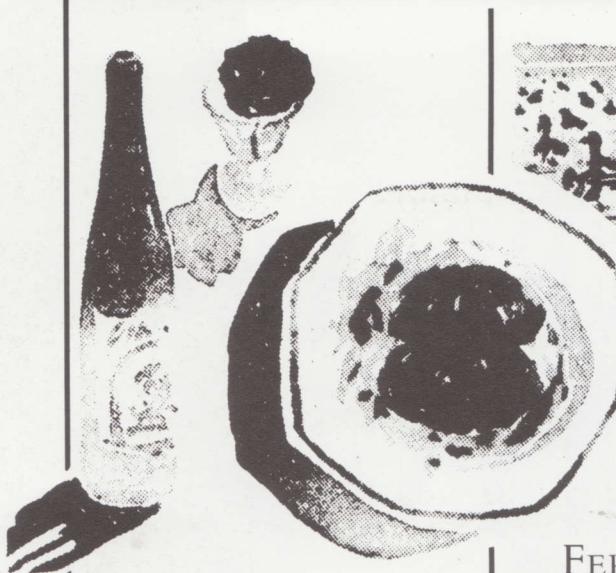
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|-----------------------------|------------|--------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------|
| Salvatore Allegra | | George F. Handel | | Camille Saint-Saëns |
| Ave Maria | 1959 | Messiah | 1942 | Samson and Delilah |
| Medico Suo Malgrado | 1962 | | | 1942, 1979 |
| Michael W. Balfe | | Engelbert Humperdinck | | Bedrich Smetana |
| The Bohemian Girl | 1943 | Hänsel and Gretel | 1942, 1982 | The Bartered Bride |
| Ludwig van Beethoven | | L. Janacek | | Johann Strauss |
| Fidelio | 1954, 1980 | Jenůfa | 1973 | Die Fledermaus |
| Vincenzo Bellini | | Ruggiero Leoncavallo | | Der Zigeunerbaron |
| La Sonnambula | 1960, 1963 | I Pagliacci | 1941, 1973 | 1962, 1984 |
| Norma | 1955, 1989 | Pietro Mascagni | | 1964 |
| I Puritani | 1975 | L'Amico Fritz | 1952 | Richard Strauss |
| Georges Bizet | | Cavalleria Rusticana | 1941, 1973 | Der Rosenkavalier |
| Carmen | 1941, 1989 | Jules Massenet | | 1964, 1984 |
| Les Pêcheurs de Perles | 1964, 1987 | Manon | 1952, 1980 | Ambroise Thomas |
| Gustave Charpentier | | Werther | 1967, 1977 | Mignon |
| Louise | 1979 | Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart | | 1966, 1975 |
| Francesco Cilea | | Così fan tutte | 1950, 1984 | Peter I. Tchaikovsky |
| Adriana Lecouvreur | 1967, 1980 | Don Giovanni | 1943, 1988 | Eugene Onegin |
| Domenico Cimarosa | | Idomeneo | 1956 | The Queen of Spades |
| Il Matrimonio Segreto | 1961 | Il Seraglio | 1949, 1964 | 1969, 1985 |
| Claude Debussy | | Le Nozze di Figaro | 1942, 1973 | 1972 |
| Pelléas et Mélisande | 1948 | Jacques Offenbach | | Giuseppe Verdi |
| Gaetano Donizetti | | Tales of Hoffmann | 1944, 1979 | Aida |
| Don Pasquale | 1952, 1987 | Amilcare Ponchielli | | Un Ballo in Maschera |
| L'Elisir d'Amore | 1958, 1987 | La Gioconda | 1944, 1984 | Don Carlo |
| La Favorita | 1942, 1982 | Giacomo Puccini | | Ernani |
| La Figlia del Reggimento | 1978 | La Bohème | 1941, 1987 | Falstaff |
| Lucia di Lammermoor | 1955, 1984 | Gianni Schicchi | 1962 | La Forza del Destino |
| Friedrich von Flotow | | Madama Butterfly | 1942, 1986 | Macbeth |
| Andrea Chénier | 1957, 1983 | Manon Lescaut | 1958, 1983 | Nabucco |
| Fedora | 1959 | Suor Angelica | 1962 | Otello |
| Christoph W. Gluck | | Tosca | 1941, 1988 | Rigoletto |
| Orfeo ed Euridice | 1960, 1986 | Turandot | 1957, 1986 | Simon Boccanegra |
| Charles F. Gounod | | Licinio Refice | | La Traviata |
| Faust | 1941, 1980 | Cecilia | 1954 | Il Trovatore |
| Roméo et Juliette | 1945 | Gioacchino Rossini | | Gerard Victory |
| | | Il Barbiere di Siviglia | 1942, 1985 | Music Hath Mischief |
| | | La Cenerentola | 1972, 1979 | 1968 |
| | | L'Italiana in Algeri | 1978 | Richard Wagner |
| | | | | The Flying Dutchman |
| | | | | 1946, 1964 |
| | | | | Lohengrin |
| | | | | 1971, 1983 |
| | | | | Tannhäuser |
| | | | | 1943, 1977 |
| | | | | Tristan und Isolde |
| | | | | 1953, 1964 |
| | | | | Die Walküre |
| | | | | 1956 |
| | | Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari | | |
| | | Il Segreto di Susanna | | 1956 |



Don Ferdinando d'Ardia Caracciolo dei Principi di Cursi

Don Ferdinando d'Ardia Caracciolo, or "Freddie" as he was more widely and affectionately known, took his final curtain call in July of this year: he passed away peacefully in Co. Wexford, aged 77, after a protracted illness. And so left the stage one of the most colourful, dashing and charming figures of the Irish opera scene. He projected a warm-hearted personality, coupled with a readiness to befriend those who crossed the many paths he walked in life. Who could ever forget that winning smile that broke across Freddie's face when he greeted you? All the old-world chivalry and courtesy was there, not least in his elegant style as a "ladies man"! He was part and parcel of the D.G.O.S. Seasons; the Dress Circle in the Gaiety will not display quite the same glamour without him.

Born in Civitavecchia, Freddie spent most of his young life in Rome. He was, you might say, the young-man-about-town, gallant and daring; he was a boxer, a daredevil, a fast motor-bike fiend. He even secured a pilot's licence which was, in fact, to lead him into the administrative end of K.L.M. airlines. It was in this arena that he first encountered by chance his wife-to-be, the strikingly beautiful Mary Augusta Purcell-Fitzgerald, better-known to us by her grandfather's pet-name for her, "Boodie". In July '38, Freddie and Boodie were married at Brompton Oratory, London, thereafter returning to settle down at the Island in Co. Waterford. Freddie at once turned his hand to breeding horses — his first stallion was called *Ernani* — not with any conspicuous success, it has to be said. In 1956 The Park, Rathfarnham, became the home of the family which was now three

children stronger, and also the scene of many delightfully generous post-opera parties.

The death of "Boodie" in 1968 was a bitter blow. She had enthusiastically shared Freddie's great love of opera and, indeed, was a most artistic person in her own right, having trained as a painter and sculptress. Things were not to be the same thereafter for Freddie. He had embarked on a business career, operating his own trading company. While his loneliness was evident, he occupied himself with his work in the Knights of Malta, his Stewardship at Leopardstown Racecourse, his directorship of both Fiat (Ireland) and of Irish Petroleum and, not least, of course, through his energetic involvement with both the Dublin Grand Opera Society and the Wexford Opera Festival. He was, unhappily, to suffer two further setbacks: once, when he was most brutally assaulted, outside his own residence, by thugs whom he valiantly tried to "take on" — an echo of his earlier boxing career, perhaps; this traumatic experience took its toll, physically and emotionally. The second was a robbery at his apartment, resulting in the loss of valuables which he had so greatly treasured.

Freddie's deep love of, and research into, opera, especially that of the Italianate genre, will assuredly be greatly missed, for he was a fund of knowledge. Dublin and Wexford were the beneficiaries of his enthusiastic commitment to opera. We will not see again that regal touch of sartorial style, with his splendid brocade waistcoat and opulent velvet dinner jacket, demonstrating his sense of occasion and attachment to the celebratory moments of life.

M. McC. — November 1989.

Alexandre Dumas the Younger and 'La dame aux camélias'

by April FitzLyon

NOTES

On February 2, 1852, Alexandre Dumas the Younger's play *La dame aux camélias* was produced at the Vaudeville Theatre in Paris. It was an immediate success, made Dumas's name — he was twenty-seven — and became one of the most popular French plays of the 19th century. It was a landmark in the French theatre for several reasons: it was one of the first dramas to take contemporary life as its theme; it was one of the first plays to show a modern — as opposed to historical — courtesan in a sympathetic light; finally, it was well-known that much of the play was true. Dumas fils had already published a novel of the same name in 1848, and had not concealed the fact that it was autobiographical, based on his own love-affair with the courtesan Marie Duplessis, who had died of consumption in 1847. Many people in the first-night audience had known her, a few even figured as minor characters in the play; certainly everyone knew all about her, for her life and death had been subjects dear to journalists, men about town, and everyone interested in gossip — in other words, all Paris. People still remembered Marie Duplessis's frequent appearances in a box at the theatre, when she was the cynosure of all eyes; they remembered her smart blue coupé, drawn by magnificent English thoroughbreds, in which she used to drive to the Bois de Boulogne. They remembered, too, the auction held in her apartment after her death to pay off her numerous creditors, when crowds of people, Dickens amongst them, had gone to gape at the elegance and luxury in which a courtesan had lived, and to speculate about the scenes which had taken place against that sumptuous décor.

Marie Duplessis — her real name was Alphonsine Plessis — was a peasant girl from Normandy. She had not come from a good home: her grandmother had been half beggar, half prostitute; her father was ill-natured, vicious, hard and debauched; his wife had left him, abandoning her two daughters. Alphonsine's father is said to have sold her to some gypsies; at any rate, when she was about fourteen she turned up in Paris, starving, dirty and in rags. Within a relatively short time she became the best-dressed woman in Paris, a trend-setter, a celebrity.

Alphonsine's progress from rags to riches was, for the epoch, classical. At first she eked out a living as a *grisette*. A *grisette* was a Parisian girl who worked in 'clean' trades: dressmaking, sewing, embroidery, braiding, flowers. Since *grisettes* were very badly paid, they were often, but not always, of easy virtue. Mimi, in Murger's *Scènes de la vie de bohème* (1849) and Puccini's opera, was a *grisette*. Alphonsine's first love-affairs may have been, like Mimi's, with poor students, but they were probably more sordid. Eventually she found a restaurant-keeper who set her up in a modest way in a little flat. But her extraordinary beauty soon caught the eye of a rich young nobleman — the Comte de Guiche, later Duc de Gramont, then aged twenty — and from then on she was launched on her career. She was kept in luxury by a number of rich lovers, mostly members of the newly-founded Jockey Club, the lions and dandies of Parisian society.

Alphonsine's most substantial bills — and they were very substantial indeed — were paid by Count Gustav Stackelberg, a retired Russian diplomat, who was then eighty years old. Three of Stackelberg's daughters had



recently died young of consumption; it is said that he was so struck by Alphonsine's likeness to one of them, and by the fact that she suffered from the same disease, that he offered to keep her in luxury, with no strings attached. Strange though this story may seem, usually reliable sources vouch for its truth; but Dumas *fils* maintained that the Count's motives were less disinterested. Stackelberg occasionally accompanied Marie Duplessis, as Alphonsine Plessis now called herself, to the theatre; he does not seem to have objected too much to her many lovers.

During the first half of the 19th century courtesans usually came from *le demi-monde*, to which neither Marie Duplessis, nor the later courtesans of the Second Empire, ever belonged. Since Dumas *fils* himself invented the expression after Marie's death in his play *Le Demi-Monde* (1855), and since he rightly foresaw that it would be misinterpreted, here is his own definition: 'Let us establish, for dictionaries of the future, that the *Demi-Monde* does not, as people believe and say in print, represent the mob of courtesans, but the group of society people who have come down in the world. Not everyone who wants to belong to the *Demi-Monde* can do so.' Society women who, for some reason — an indiscreet love affair, an illegitimate child — were no longer accepted by their peers, formed the demi-monde; their manners were acceptable, but their morals were not. These women were often very short of money and, either from poverty or inclination, sometimes became courtesans. Since they were educated women, from the same social set as the men who frequented them, they could provide much more than sex; they could entertain and amuse, arrange elegant parties,

and provide intelligent companionship. The *Demi-monde* was a refined, though permissive, society.

Despite her humble origins, Marie Duplessis belonged to this tradition of refined and intelligent courtesans; she certainly did not resemble the courtesans of the Second Empire, coarse harpies such as Cora Pearl. Unlike them, she appears to have been sensitive, modest and intuitive, to have had what Liszt described as 'an enchanting nature'; to have had a heart. Unlike them, she was never responsible for scandals, debts, suicides. She had a natural refinement and distinction; and she had good taste, both in appearance and behaviour. When she arrived in Paris she could only just sign her name; but she soon learned to write correctly, to ride, to dance, and play the piano, to behave like a great lady. Her library was quite extensive: it consisted mainly of the Romantics — Dumas *pere*, Lamartine, Musset, Walter Scott — but also included Molière, Cervantes and, significantly, Prévost's *Manon Lescaut* (1731), which plays a prominent part in the novel of Dumas *fils*.

Above all, Marie Duplessis learned to talk well, and this was perhaps her principal charm — men enjoyed her company. Jules Janin witnessed her first meeting with Liszt, in a theatre; Liszt was enthralled by her conversation, and they talked throughout a whole act of the play. 'No coarse expression ever passed her lips,' said an Englishman who knew her. 'Lola Montès could not make friends, Alphonsine Plessis could not make enemies.' But telling the truth was not her strong point; she used to say: 'Lying keeps the teeth white'.

NOTES



Despite her way of life, Marie Duplessis retained a capacity for feeling and an innocence rare in her profession, which gave her an added piquancy. 'She had been a *grisette*', said Dumas, 'that is why she still had a heart'. Liszt went further: 'The habit of what one calls (and perhaps is) corrupting never touched her heart'. She was the personification of the Romantic heroine: thin, pale, with large dark eyes; she was melancholy, and suffered from *ennui*, Musset's *mal du siècle*. Above all she bore what was, ever since *Werther*, the greatest Romantic distinction: she was marked in the prime of youth by the certainty of an early death.

'I shan't live,' she told Liszt. 'I'm an odd sort of girl, and I won't be able to hold on to this life, which I don't know how to lead, and which I don't know how to bear, either. Take me, take me away wherever you like; I won't be in your way, I sleep all day, in the evening you'll let me go to the theatre, and at night you'll do what you like with me.' Liszt did contemplate taking her to Constantinople, but nothing came of it. He was profoundly moved by her death, and said that, had he been in Paris when she died, he would have had his 'quarter of an hour as Des Grieux'.

Dumas *fils* met Marie Duplessis in 1844. They were both twenty years old; but whereas Marie had already reached the summit of her career, Alexandre had not yet published anything, and was merely the son of a famous father. The story of their meeting is exactly retold in Dumas's novel: Dumas figures as Armand Duval (Alfredo Germont in the opera), and Marie as Marguerite Gautier

(Violetta Valery in the opera). The course of their love-affair is described in the novel with many details and subsidiary characters taken from real life; the play is necessarily more schematic, the opera even more so. 'However', wrote Dumas, 'Marie Duplessis did not have all the pathetic adventures which I ascribe to Marguerite Gautier, but she wanted nothing better than to have them. If she did not sacrifice anything to Armand, it is because Armand did not wish her to. To her great regret, she was only able to play the first and second acts of the drama'.

There are two important incidents in the drama which did not occur in real life. Firstly, Dumas *père* did not intervene in the love-affair, and his character in no way resembled that of Duval *père* who, in the fictions, speaks for conventional morality. That was not at all the line of the author of *The Count of Monte Cristo*, who was an exuberant sensualist and *bon vivant*. The second important difference is that Dumas *fils* did not return in time to have a death bed reconciliation with his mistress, as Duval does in the stage version. The end of the story in real life was rather different.

About a year before her death, Marie Duplessis went to London with one of her protectors of long standing, the Vicomte Edouard de Perregaux. They were married in Kensington Register Office in February, 1846, and then returned to France. Both seem to have regretted this marriage, which was anyway probably not legally valid in France. They never lived together as husband and wife, and Marie did not use her husband's name, although she did sometimes use his



title and his coat of arms. She died of consumption a fortnight after her twenty-third birthday. Of the many men who had been her friends or lovers, only her husband and, perhaps, old Count Stackelberg attended her funeral. Dumas was abroad at the time; when he heard of the news he hurried back to Paris and, overwhelmed with remorse and nostalgia, wrote his novel in a few days. He probably was present, with Perregaux, when her body was later exhumed in order to be reburied elsewhere; this grizzly scene is described in detail in his novel. Marie Duplessis became something of a cult figure; for many years after her death people used to deposit camellias on her grave.

The title of the novel and the play was Dumas's own invention. Marie Duplessis was never referred to as '*la dame aux camélias*' during her lifetime. But she did have a predilection for those flowers, and almost always wore or carried them, partly because they were very expensive, and she loved everything expensive, but mainly because they have no scent — scent made her feel faint. Dumas may have derived his title from the nickname of a certain Lautour-Mézeray, who was known as '*l'homme au camélia*'; he was a dandy, who never went out without a camellia in his button-hole, and is reputed to have spent over 50,000 francs on this whim.

Later, Dumas *fils* turned his novel into a play. At first it was banned by the censor; but it was finally produced after the accession of Napoleon III, thanks to his half-brother, the Duc de Morny. Although *La dame aux camélias* was a box-office success from the first, it did arouse a good deal of controversy.

Many people felt that it was a glorification of vice, the product of a permissive society; others, more perceptive, discerned in it in embryo the moralising element which was soon to become an integral part of all the work of Dumas *fils*; but the majority accepted it simply as a moving human story.

In *La dame aux camélias*, which is not typical of his work as a whole, Dumas *fils* for once outstripped his famous father, and created a play which has stood the test of time. It has done so partly because in it Dumas *fils* expressed a deeply-felt personal experience; but it lives mainly because in the part of Marguerite Gautier he created a magnificent opportunity for a great dramatic actress. Among the many great actresses from various countries who seized that opportunity were: Madame Doche (the first Marguerite), Sarah Bernhardt, Eleonora Duse, Ludmilla Pitoëff, and Edwige Feuillière (Paris, 1937, London, 1955). Amongst many famous productions, there was one by Meyerhold (1935). It was a very popular part of the silent cinema — there were eleven versions between 1907 and 1927, including one by Sarah Bernhardt (1911). On the screen the part was played by Yvonne Printemps (1934) and Garbo (*Camille*, 1937) among many others. Mauro Bolognini's version (1981) with Isabelle Huppert as Marguerite, is the twenty-third film to be based on Dumas's play.

At the end of the first performance of his play Dumas's friends asked him if he was going on to a party to celebrate his success. He replied that he was not, as he was spending the evening with a lady; he then

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went to have a quiet supper with his mother. This anecdote contains the key to Dumas's life and work, and particularly to his relationship with Marie Duplessis; for he was illegitimate, and the difficulties both he and his mother had had as a result had marked him profoundly.

Dumas's mother, Catherine Labay, who had also been a *grisette*, had lived with Dumas *père* when he first came to Paris, twenty-one years old, and quite unknown. When he became famous, he abandoned her; but he recognised his son, with whom he was very friendly, despite the difference in their characters. Catherine Labay was a virtuous and hard-working woman, whose son adored her. He had seen what she had suffered on his behalf, and he himself had suffered taunts at school about his illegitimacy. His mother's difficult life had made him able to see the woman's point of view better than most men of his time, and had made his relationship with Marie different to the relationships she usually had with men. Dumas was sympathetic to women who, at that time, could barely earn a decent living without resorting to prostitution; he was sympathetic to the predicament of illegitimate children; and he was shocked by the callous treatment women often received from men. He campaigned all his life against these ills, and in this respect can be called a pioneer of women's liberation — he was the first to use the word '*feministe*' (in 1872).

But Dumas was far from supporting feminism in all its aspects. As he grew older, and society under Napoleon III became ever more permissive, he became an ever more intransigent moralist. He wished to defend the family and family life, which he himself had never had. He waged war on adultery in any form for any reason, and even maintained that a husband could and should kill an adulterous wife. All this in theory; Dumas was himself an adulterer, and had an illegitimate child. Like many moralists, he did not practise

what he preached. Many of his ideas were far-fetched, but some were not, and his numerous writings on illegitimacy and the problems of unmarried mothers did much to change public opinion and thus, eventually, French legislation. Dumas's preface to the 1868 edition of *La dame aux camélias* is a passionate defence of 'fallen' women, and an attack on 'respectable' marriages for money or position, which he considered, as Tolstoy did, to be another form of prostitution.

The first performance of Dumas's play coincided with the birth of the Second Empire, an epoch to which Marie Duplessis had never belonged, and which represented everything which Dumas *fils* deplored. Under Napoleon III's despotic regime, which silenced public opinion and took all political initiative away from the French people, the nation, encouraged by the court, gave itself up to money-making and the pursuit of pleasure. It was an affluent, empty and cynical society. Paris became what it had never been before, but what is still remains in the imagination of some foreigners: the world centre for night life and sexual permissiveness. Dumas himself laid the blame for this on the newly-invented railways, which had made access to Paris easier for provincial Frenchmen and foreigners.

Marie Duplessis, with her melancholy ennui, her love of poetry, and her romantic belief in the possibility of love, would have had no place in the Second Empire; she belonged rather to the Romanticism of 1830. In 1868 Dumas himself said that his play could not have been written then. 'Not only would it no longer be true, it would no longer be possible.' By then men no longer expected companionship, culture or refinement from courtesans, who had become merely expensive prostitutes, conspicuous symbols of affluence.

Reprinted, with kind permission, from the English National Opera Guide to La Traviata.

LA TRAVIATA

Libretto by Francesco Maria Piave, based on *La Dame aux Camélias*, first a novel, later a play by Alexandre Dumas the younger

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| Conductor | David Parry |
| Producer | Michael Hunt |
| Designer | Tim Reed |
| Lighting Designer | Brian Harris |
| Repetiteur | Jimmy Vaughan |
| Stage Manager | Sheelagh McCabe |

La Traviata was first performed at the Teatro la Fenice, Venice, on March 6th 1853.

Dates of performances:
December 2, 4, 6, 8, 1989 at 7.30 p.m.

THE CAST in order of appearance

| | | |
|---|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| Violetta Valery | a courtesan | Karen Huffstodt |
| Flora Bervoix | a friend of Violetta | Susan Daniel |
| Marquis d'Obigny | | Frank O'Brien |
| Baron Douphol | a rival of Alfredo | Peter Loehle |
| Doctor Grenvil | | Nigel Williams |
| Gaston | | |
| | Vicomte de Letorières | Francis Egerton |
| Alfredo Germont | | Patrick Power |
| Annina | | |
| | Violetta's servant | Sylvia O'Regan |
| Giuseppe | | |
| | Violetta's servant | Robert Burt |
| Giorgio Germont | | |
| | Alfredo's father | Dimitri Kharitonov |
| A messenger | | Garrick Forbes |
| Servant to Flora | | Noel O'Callaghan |
| Ladies and gentlemen, friends of Violetta and Flora. Matadors, Gypsies, Servants, etc. | | |

Dublin Grand Opera Society Chorus
Chorus Master: Jonathan Webb

Radio Telefis Éireann Concert Orchestra
(by kind permission of the RTE Authority)
Leader: Alan Smale

The set and coostumes in this production were designed for New Israeli Opera's production of *La Traviata*, first performed at the Israeli Festival in 1987.

There will be two intervals.

*An
Opera
in
Three
Acts*

**Giuseppe
Verdi**

Place and time: In and near Paris. About 1850.

SYNOPSIS

A CT ONE

In the salon of the beautiful demi-mondaine, Violetta Valéry, a party is in progress. Among the guests is Alfredo Germont. He is introduced to Violetta by Gaston who explains to her that for a year and more the young man has been in love with her from a distance. Invited by Violetta to sing a drinking song, Alfredo launches into the spirited *Libiamo nei lieti calici* in praise of the gay life. As the guests are about to go dancing in another room, Violetta is stricken by a sudden faintness and a spasm of coughing — a sinister premonition of the fatal disease that already ravages her. She quickly recovers, however. As soon as they are alone, Alfredo tells her of his long-felt love. (*Un di felice, eterea.*) Violetta at first takes this declaration lightly and advises him that it were best to forget her. Seemingly as an after-thought when Alfredo is about to leave, she gives him one of her camellias with the promise that she will meet him again "when the flower has withered".

When all her guests have gone Violetta's great *scena*, "Ah, forse è lui" begins. Strangely perturbed by her encounter with the young man, the brittle woman of the world wonders whether this might not be what she has never yet experienced — a serious love (*un serio amore*). With a bitter laugh she quickly dismisses these wistful thoughts as folly. Her chosen path of frivolous dissipation must now, she knows, be followed to its end. But as towards the close of the brilliant *cabaletta* the voice of Alfredo reaches her from below her balcony we know that her resolve is already weakening and that the two are destined to meet again.

ACT TWO SCENE ONE

Violetta and Alfredo have indeed met again and have been three months together in her secluded country house near Paris. In his aria *Dei miei bollenti spiriti* Alfredo tells of

their happiness in this rural haven of peace. Annina, Violetta's maid, enters. She is returning, Alfredo learns, from Paris whither she had been sent to sell most of her mistress's remaining possessions in order to pay the considerable expenses of the establishment. Greatly shocked and humiliated by this unexpected information he declares he will go himself to Paris at once to raise some money. When Violetta has re-entered, a visitor is announced. It is Giorgio Germont, Alfredo's father, come to rescue his son from, as he imagines, the toils of a mercenary female. From being nonplussed by the dignity with which Violetta meets his charge ("I am a woman, sir, and in my own house"), old Germont is further discomposed when she quickly convinces him, with proof in hand, that her's is the money, not Alfredo's, which pays for all this "luxury" he has indicated. He begs her, however to leave Alfredo, pleading that while the family scandal of their association remains, the young man whom his daughter loves will not marry her. Violetta at first violently refuses the strange demand — she would rather die than give up Alfredo. This dialogue proceeds in the form of a duet of great pathos. Finally, convinced by Germont's reminder that as soon as her youth and beauty fade she will have no hold on Alfredo ("What then?" he asks), Violetta consents. In return she asks only a blessing of the old man. Germont goes to wait in the garden for his son. As Violetta is writing a farewell letter to Alfredo the latter enters in search of his father. Concealing her letter from Alfredo's eyes, Violetta embraces him and in the great outburst *Amami, Alfredo, quant'io t'amo... Addio!* (the climax of the opera) she declares undying love for him. She runs distractedly from the room. A servant soon enters with Violetta's letter. As Alfredo reads the shattering words, Germont père reappears. Neither his comforting words nor his appeal (*Di Provenza*) to the prodigal to return

to his family can calm Alfredo's frenzy. Believing that Violetta has left him to return to Paris and a former lover, the Baron Douphol, Alfredo dashes off in pursuit with thoughts only of revenging himself on her.

ACT TWO SCENE TWO

Paris. The salon in the house of Flora, a friend of Violetta's. The guests are entertained by a ballet featuring Spanish gypsies and matadors. All Violetta's old friends are there. News of her break with Alfredo has already reached Paris so that on the arrival of Alfredo, who is soon followed by Violetta on the arm of Baron Douphol, the atmosphere becomes electric. Alfredo sits down at a card table and, excited by his phenomenal winnings keeps up a run of ironic comments designedly offensive to Violetta and the Baron. The latter reacts, joins the card game and loses to Alfredo. As they rise to go to supper the Baron remarks that he will have his revenge after supper. Alfredo's reply is a veiled challenge to a duel. Violetta, in great agitation, returns to the empty stage. She has sent for Alfredo to warn him to beware of the Baron, a dangerous swordsman. Keeping her promise to his father, she maintains to him that she loves him no more and that the Baron is now her "protector". Enraged by this, Alfredo loudly summons all the guests. Pointing to Violetta, he proclaims the favours he received from her and with the brutal words *Qui testimon vi chiamo ch'ora pagata io l'ho* ("I call you all to witness that I've paid in full") he throws his winnings at her feet. Old Germont, a witness to the shameful episode, disowns the son who insults a woman thus. The Baron challenges Alfredo to a duel and all the company express their reaction in the concerted finale to the Act.

ACT THREE

The last Act is introduced by the beautiful and poignant orchestral prelude to which the curtain rises on Violetta's bedroom. She is sick and poor, with only the faithful Annina to attend her. It is early morning and carnival time. Dr. Grenvil visits the invalid who is not deceived by his comforting assurances of recovery. To Annina the Doctor confides that her mistress has but a few hours to live.

Left alone for a moment, Violetta re-reads a cherished letter from old Germont which tells her that after the duel, in which the Baron was wounded, Alfredo had to flee the country; that he now understood the nature of Violetta's great sacrifice and was hastening back to her. "Too late!" she cries and in the very moving soliloquy *Addio del passato* she pictures her approaching end, lonely and forgotten, her beauty gone. The sounds of carnival are heard outside, and Annina rushes in to prepare her mistress for a visitor. It is Alfredo who implores her forgiveness. Forgetting her sick condition, they plan a new life together far from Paris, *Parigi, o cara*, but Violetta is now too exhausted even to dress. Alfredo sends Annina to fetch the doctor, but Violetta realises that nothing can help her now. In an outburst, she protests against her fate at dying so young *Gran dio! morir si giovine*, and Alfredo adds his tears to hers.

Annina returns with Dr. Grenvil and Germont, who gives Violetta his blessing. Violetta asks Alfredo to take a locket containing a miniature of her: should he one day marry it will be for his wife, from one who will be in Heaven praying for them both. The others express their great sorrow, and Violetta suddenly feels her pain has ceased. She tries to greet life once more, but sinks back, dead.

SYNOPSIS

What does Carmen

The Enigma of Carmen by Toril Moi



GITANES
CIGARETTES DE LA RÉGIE FRANÇAISE

F

or over a century Carmen has been a source of constant fascination to generations of opera-goers. On film her popularity is equally assured: so far she has been the subject of well over thirty films. Given such evidence of lasting success, it is tempting to conclude that it is due to some intrinsic quality of the heroine. Many critics and opera fans concur in seeing her as dark, passionate, perhaps even demonic, but above all as enigmatic and powerful. However, if we pause to ask what exactly it is that endows Carmen with the aura of mystery and power so many critics have remarked upon, the answer is far from simple.

On the face of it, it is the very fact that she is considered to be enigmatic which ought to surprise us. For what can be less puzzling than a woman's desire to live a life of her own choosing? In a man, it would be taken for granted. So-called enigmatic women are rarely enigmatic to themselves: Mona Lisa probably knows very well why she smiles. The apparent enigma of Carmen, then, is more likely to be an effect of somebody else's perspective than of her own. It is Don José's obsession with the desire of Carmen ('What do women want? What does Carmen want?') which here is transmitted to the audience of the opera. Moreover, I think that she comes to seem mysterious to him simply because he fails to master her. 'Mysterious' is after all just another word for 'impenetrable'. As long as her mind remains her own, stubbornly refusing to become nothing more than a receptacle for his desires, Carmen will seem opaque to the penetrating gaze of the male. For, despite appearances, Bizet's opera is structured from Don José's perspective.

Want?



Galli-Marié,
The first Carmen

What is enigmatic for Don José, is enigmatic for the work as a whole. If we too perceive Carmen as mysterious, it may be because, unwittingly, we have been made to accept her lover's point of view. The opera, in other words, turns us all into Carmen's lovers.

The fact that the original opera is structured from Don José's perspective becomes evident if we try to shift our perspective radically away from him, and to see Carmen from a point of view more sympathetic to her social and erotic position as a woman in a patriarchal society, and as a proletarianized member of an ethnic minority. What from one angle may be the pittoresque spectacle of a group of high-spirited and half-naked females, from another becomes the very image of a callous exploitation of female labour power. If Carmen quarrels with her fellow workers, it is more likely to be due to racial tensions between gypsies and Andalusians, then to her intrinsically demonic nature. Once arrested, she cannot expect much leniency from a still feudal and patriarchal Spanish judicial system. No wonder then that in a desperate bid for freedom she decides to market the only commodity she has as a poor woman: her own body. The fact that her gaoler, Don José, falls for her ploy, only demonstrates the validity of her analysis of male behaviour.

Seen from such a woman-centred perspective, Carmen gains in humanity, but undeniably loses in power and mystery. In fact, this perspective alone cannot produce a convincing account of the rest of the plot. For it is only when Don José has fallen for her charms that the actual plot gets off the ground: it is the repeated frustration of his desire which keeps the narrative going. Strictly speaking then,

Carmen is not so much the story of Carmen as the tale of Don José.

This is even more true of Prosper Mérimée's short story *Carmen* from 1845, Bizet's original source. In Mérimée's version, Carmen is a tale told by Don José to the male narrator of the story on the eve of Don José's execution for the murder of his mistress. Explicitly turning her into the silent object of a tale of male desire, this narrative strategy can only provide the reader with a blurred and indirect impression of the heroine.

There is, however, a vital difference between the short story and the opera. Listening to the opera we do not feel, despite the evidence of the plot, that Carmen is nothing more than the elusive object of Don José's pathological desire for the exclusive possession of a woman. On the contrary, on stage or on film, Carmen appears as a forceful presence in her own right. What we see and hear, then, is not the sorry tale of Carmen the oppressed gypsy, nor simply the story of a strong woman seeking freedom and power in a life outside the law, but above all a murderous struggle between male and female, the ever fascinating spectacle of desire and death. The short story's Carmen is a feeble creature indeed compared with the vitality and power of the same character on stage. And the reason for this difference is simply one of form: in Mérimée's story Don José speaks for Carmen; on stage, Carmen speaks for herself.

Independence and dominance: male jealousy and female death

If Don José's desire sets the plot in motion, his jealousy propels it on towards its tragic end. In fact, for Don José, desire and jealousy apparently amount to the same thing. His

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original passion for Carmen being above all a desire to conquer and possess her, his jealousy is not so much a paranoid fear of rivals as an intensification of the need for exclusive dominance of his mistress.

As Marcel Proust well knew, such possessive passion can never find real satisfaction. As long as the desired woman remains other, that is, as long as she remains a person with a will and desires of her own, the jealous lover will never achieve the comprehensive control he wants. Paradoxically, the only way of ensuring the utter subjection of another human being is to kill him or her. For Don José, the annihilation of Carmen's consciousness is the final solution to the problem of her desire. Dead, she can no longer escape. The fact that she can no longer love either, only reveals the strength of the drive for domination lurking behind his traditional expressions of passion.

In killing Carmen, Don José finally manages to enforce the masculine ideals encouraged by his (and Bizet's) society. A real man is supposed to be able to master his women: nothing is more contemptible than a henpecked hero. Since Carmen not only shares Don José's masculinist values, but uses them to taunt him for his weakness, the opera effectively ensures that we get the point: what is at stake here is not so much Carmen's love as Don José's manhood. The struggle between the sexes in this opera, first emphasized by Nietzsche, is acted out in Don José's ferocious efforts to appear more virile than Carmen.

For there can be no doubt that Bizet's Carmen represents independence, strength and integrity to such an extent that she would seem to acquire the very masculine or virile qualities Don José desperately wants to appropriate for himself. In Freudian terms, then, the plot of Carmen can be read as a textbook illustration of the links between male castration anxiety and violence, or in other words: Don José kills in a last ditch attempt to shore up his threatened masculinity.

The interesting twist in the plot, both in the opera and in Mérimée's short story, is the fact that Carmen herself appears to desire this

end to their battle. On the one hand it is easy to dismiss the specific detail as the kind of masculinist wishful thinking often indulged in by rapists and wifebeaters alike ('she was dying for it, really'). On the other hand, Carmen's acquiescence in Don José's final act of murderous penetration is not just a coincidental detail, but the logical extension of her previous behaviour. Throughout the opera, Carmen explicitly defends traditional masculinist values, repeatedly using them to goad her lover on to ever new exploits of mastery and dominance. Although her own independence is modelled on some highly masculine patterns of freedom and integrity, the opera nevertheless insists that she also desires to be subjugated by an even more powerful man. The character of Carmen on stage is shaped and structured precisely by this crucial paradox.

Men, women and Carmen

The strength of the opera and the source of its general appeal to both men and women, lies precisely in this ambiguity: does Carmen want to dominate or does she want to be dominated? In leaving the answer to this question open and ambiguous, the opera manages to provide both the most phallic or aggressive and the most passive or masochistic desires with a point of identification or projection. Whether male or female, masculine or feminine (and as Carmen proves, maleness and masculinity, femaleness and femininity, do not necessarily go together), every spectator can find a niche for his or her own specific pleasure. In other words: if Bizet turns us all into Carmen's lovers, we nevertheless remain free to choose the mode in which we want to desire her. This is why I think it is possible for women to enjoy Carmen without being reduced to mere male impersonators.

Toril Moi

Toril Moi is director of the centre for feminist research in the humanities at the University of Bergen, Norway and the author of *Sexual/Textual Politics* (Methuen 1985)

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CARMEN

*Georges
Bizet*

*An
Opera
in
Four
Acts*

Libretto by Henri Meilhac and Ludovic Halévy, based on the novel by Prosper Mérimée.

| | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| Conductor | Albert Rosen |
| Producer | Jean-Claude Auvray |
| Designer | Bernard Arnould |
| Lighting Designer | Brian Harris |
| Repetiteur | Steven Naylor |
| Stage Manager | Chantal Hauser |

Carmen was first performed at the Opera-Comique, Paris, on 3rd March, 1875.

Dates of performances:
December 3, 5, 7, 9, 1989 at 7.30 p.m.

THE CAST

in order of appearance

| | |
|---|------------------------|
| Morales | |
| an officer | Frank O'Brien |
| Micaëla | |
| a peasant girl | Mariette Kemmer |
| Zuniga | |
| a captain | Peter Loehle |
| Don José | |
| a corporal | Stefano Algieri |
| Carmen | |
| a cigarette girl and gypsy | Luretta Bybee |
| Frasquita | |
| friend of Carmen | Regina Nathan |
| Mercédès | |
| friend of Carmen | Susan Daniel |
| Escamillo | |
| a torereador | Balazs Poka |
| Dancairo | |
| a smuggler | Brendan Cavanagh |
| Remendado | |
| a smuggler | Francis Egerton |
| Dragoons, townspeople, street urchins, cigarette girls, gypsies, smugglers, etc. | |
| Tallaght Boys' Choir | |
| trained by Fr. Thomas McCarthy, O.P. | |
| Rubato Dance Company | |
| choreographer: Fiona Quilligan | |
| Dublin Grand Opera Society Chorus | |
| Chorus Master: Jonathan Webb | |
| Radio Telefís Éireann Concert Orchestra | |
| (by kind permission of the RTE Authority) | |
| Leader: Alan Smale | |
| Set built by Chameleon Productions (Ireland) Ltd., Belfast. | |
| Costumes designed by Bernard Arnould on hire from Opera Royal de Wallonie. | |
| There will be three intervals. | |

*The action takes place in and around Seville
about 1820*

SYNOPSIS

A CT ONE

A square in Seville. Soldiers lingering about a military guardhouse watch people pass through the square. Micaëla, a young village girl, enters, looking for a corporal, Don José. The soldiers reply he is not a member of the current guard, and invite her to wait with them. The shy girl makes excuses, however, and runs off. The new guard arrives, with it Don José, preceded by a group of street urchins who imitate the marching dragoons. José learns of his visitor, but his conversation with Zuniga soon turns to the girls from the cigarette factory located on the square. A bell rings and a crowd gathers to watch the girls emerge. The last to appear is the anxiously awaited gypsy Carmen, who teases her admirers with an explanation of her philosophy of love. José, by ignoring her, catches her attention. She tosses a flower at him, then follows the girls back to work. Micaëla returns and, finding José alone, delivers a letter and a kiss from his mother. José is moved, and he promises Micaëla he will return home, confirming the promise with a kiss. She leaves as screams are heard from the factory. A fight has broken out, and the girls, pouring out into the square, alternately blame Carmen and Manuelita. José goes inside with two guards and emerges holding Carmen, who, he found out, struck the other girl in the course of their argument. Asked to account for her action, Carmen replies defiantly. Zuniga sentences her to prison and leaves her with José. The gypsy cajoles her captor with promises of rendezvous at the tavern of Lillas Pastia, and José releases her bonds. Zuniga reappears with confirmation of his sentence and places Carmen under José's command. As they depart, Carmen gives

José a prearranged shove and escapes through the cheering crowd and shrieking cigarette girls.

ACT TWO

The Tavern of Lillas Pastia. Soldiers and gypsies have gathered at Lillas Pastia's, a meeting place for smugglers. Carmen and her gypsy friends, Frasquita and Mercédès regale those present with a song about the joys of gypsy life. She soon learns from Zuniga that José, imprisoned because of her escape, has been freed. Shouts from outside announce the arrival of Escamillo, the Toreador who has just won a bullfight in Granada. He describes to his admirers the excitement of the bullring and the pleasure of knowing that love awaits him. He makes it clear that he is attracted to Carmen, but she coyly brushes him aside. Suggesting that Carmen will see him again, the Toreador leaves. Her friends ask Carmen to join them in a smuggling enterprise, but thinking of José now out of prison, she turns them down. They ridicule her professing to be in love and are surprised when José's voice is heard in the distance. They suggest that she persuade him to join their band, then leave Carmen to greet her dragoon alone. She stirs his jealousy by telling him she had danced for the others; then she dances for José. He watches her, entranced, but at the sound of trumpets calling retreat he moves to go. Carmen rages, and José entreats her to listen; he explains how the flower she tossed at him signified hope of seeing her again through his stay in prison. Carmen seizes the opportunity to tempt him into her way of life, but José is determined to leave. Zuniga

comes in suddenly, in search of Carmen. He contemptuously accuses her of taking a common soldier instead of his superior, and orders José back to the barracks. When he refuses, the two draw swords. Carmen stops them and calls the others for help. Dancairo and Remendado threaten Zuniga politely with pistols, leaving José no choice but to join forces with the wandering smugglers.

ACT THREE

The smuggling band files into a rocky retreat to wait until the path is clear to proceed. José's thoughts of his mother provoke Carmen, who is not disturbed by the possibility of separation, to suggest that he return to her. Frasquita and Mercédès, take out cards to read their fortunes. One foresees love, the other wealth. Carmen tries her hand and foresees only death. Dancairo and Remendado enter with news that the band must move on, leaving only José to stand watch. Micaëla comes in search of José, and, on approaching the craggy spot, she prays for protection. She spots him but he runs to hide at the sound of a shot. José has fired at a trespasser who turns out to be Escamillo. When the Toreador tells him he has come to find the woman he loves — Carmen — the men draw knives. Escamillo is pleased to be rescued by Carmen and departs after inviting everyone to his next bullfight in Seville. Remendado discovers Micaëla, who pleads with José to return home. Carmen sharply encourages him to go, but José, in defiance, refuses. Finally Micaëla informs him that his mother is dying, and in desperation José agrees to follow her. As they turn to go, Escamillo's voice is heard in the distance.

Carmen moves toward it, but José stands in her way.

SYNOPSIS

ACT FOUR

A Square in Seville. Vendors of programmes, fans, oranges and cigarettes mingle with the crowd outside the bullring. Escamillo enters with Carmen at his side, and they vow love for each other before he disappears into the ring. Frasquita and Mercédès warn Carmen that José is lurking about, but she does not fear him. The crowd enters the bull ring and José appears. He begs Carmen to go away with him, to begin a new life together. She replies bluntly that there can be no such thing and moves toward the arena. José tries to stop her and when she tosses away a ring he had given her, he plunges his knife into her. The crowd reminds Escamillo that love awaits him, and the distraught José awaits his arrest for Carmen's death.

D.G.O.S. CHORUS

Chorus Master: Jonathan Webb

LADIES

Dorothy Allen
Stella Byrne
Anne Deegan
Colette Delahunt
June Ellison
Patricia Finnegan
Kathryn Fitzgerald
Emer Forde
Ursula Fowler
Noreen Hanratty
Mona Jeacle
Fidelma Kelly
Una Kinirons
Una Larkin
Pauline McHugh
Sheila Moloney
Mary Moriarty
Joan O'Farrell
Aine O'Neill
Dorothy Thomson
Mary Troy
Sylvia Whelan
Veronica Whelan

GENTLEMEN

Ian Baar
John Brady
Paddy Brennan
Robert Burt
John Carney
Tom Carney
John Doyle
Keith Ferari
Adrian Fisher
Garrick Forbes
Peter Hickmet
Barry Hodkinson
Jonathan Hollows
Michael Hughes
Sean Kelly
Vincent McDonald
Valerie Martinez
Tim Morgan
Noel O'Callaghan
Proinnsias O'Raghallaigh
George Pearce
Andrew Percival
Jim Price
Grant Shelley

TALLAGHT BOYS' CHOIR

Choral Director: Fr. Thomas MacCarthy, O.P.

Colin Bebbington
Charles Cavanagh
Stephen Corr
Michael John Geaney
David Griffin
Gerard Griffin
Colm Kavanagh
Thomas Keating
Alan Kelly
Gavin McCormack
Ian McPartin
Darren Ward
Karl Whitney
Paul Wyse

RUBATO BALLET

Artistic Director: Fiona Quilligan

Muirne Bloomer
David Bolger
Jeffrey Fox
Zelda Quilligan

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We wish to thank the following for their kind assistance with the productions:

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Dublin Port Transit Ltd.
Askus Translation Services
Matt McNulty
Paul Cooke
The Abbey Theatre
The Gate Theatre
The Dept. of Defence
Shelbourne Hotel

'CARMEN' SOLDIERS

Cpl. Noel Godfrey, 2nd Battalion,
Cathal Brugha Barracks
Cpl. Derek Bridders, Military Police,
Collins Barracks
Pte. Eddie O'Neill, Eastern Command H.Q.,
Collins Barracks
Cpl. Mick Tylan, 2nd Battalion,
Cathal Brugha Barracks

ELAINE PADMORE

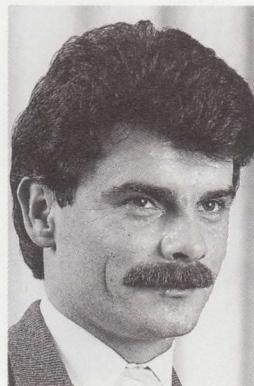
Artistic Director

Artistic Director of Wexford Festival Opera; joins DGOS for the first of two seasons. Studied music at Birmingham University and Guildhall School of Music, London. Singer, pianist, writer (book on Wagner and numerous articles), lecturer on opera at Royal Academy of Music, London, regular broadcaster on BBC Radio 3 and World Service. Chief Producer of Opera for BBC Radio until 1982 when she joined Wexford. In 1986 received Sunday Independent Arts Award for services to music in Ireland.

**DAVID COLLOPY**

Administrator

Born in Wexford where he studied Accountancy before joining Wexford Festival Opera in 1980 as Administrator, a position he held for five years. After Wexford, he joined a London based design consultancy — GSA — as Financial Controller. In 1985 he became the first Administrator and Company Secretary with the new Dublin Grand Opera Society Company. In this capacity, he has administered nineteen of the Society's opera productions. In the latter part of 1988 he was seconded on temporary assignment to RTE as Concerts Manager.

**JONATHAN WEBB**

Chorus Master

Graduated from University of Manchester 1985. Conducted Alan Ridout's *Angelo* for Kent Opera and *West Side Story* for the Opera House, Manchester, Assistant conductor to Janos Furst for DGOS *Don Giovanni* 1988 and Roderick Brydon for *Norma*, Spring 1989. Chorus Master of DGOS since September 1988. Recently conducted Sondheim's *Company* for RADA in London and Stravinsky's *Soldier's Tale* for Opera Theatre Company in Ireland.

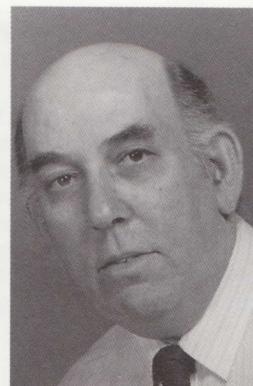
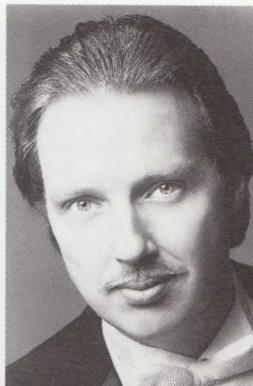


ARTISTS' PROFILES

STEFANO ALGIERI

Tenor (USA): Don José

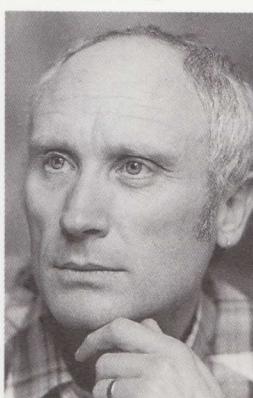
Rose to international acclaim when Opera Magazine proclaimed him "the young Del Monaco" following his performance of Don Alvaro in *La Forza del Destino*. He was born in Hoboken, New Jersey, and received his vocal training in New York City. His repertoire includes Radames, Don Carlos, Andrea Chenier, Riccardo and Turridi which he has sung with such companies as New York City Opera, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Canadian Opera Company, San Francisco, Strasbourg and Lyons. Future includes Alvaro in Scottish Opera's new *Forza* and Paris debut in Bastille's coming *Katya Kabanova*.



BERNARD ARNOULD

Designer, *Carmen*

Worked as a designer for O.R.T.F., then in 1972 joined the Paris Opera as head of design. His earliest collaborations with Jean-Claude Auvray began in the mid-70s with Rossini's *Elisabetta, Regina d'Inghilterra* at Aix, *Le Roi d'Ys* in Wexford and *Carmen* at Toulouse and Grenoble. They have mounted three other versions of *Carmen* in Munich, Belgium and Bulgaria. Among numerous other projects, he has designed *Boris Godounov*, *Flying Dutchman* and *Nabucco* for Orange, *Don Pasquale* for Montreal, and *Orphée aux Enfers* at the Paris Opera with Jean-Louis Martinoty last December.

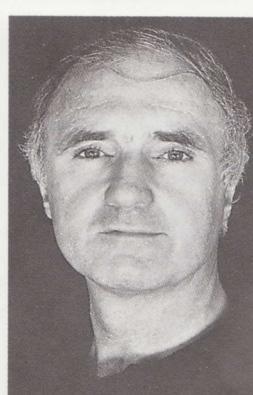
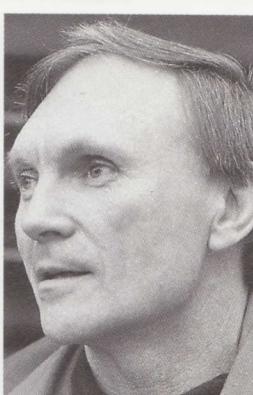


JEAN-CLAUDE AUVRAY

Producer, *Carmen*

Assisted such directors as Vilar, Ponnelle and Strehler, and in 1973 was appointed by Rolf Liebermann as resident producer at the Paris Opera, remaining until 1977 (during which period he visited Wexford to produce *Le Roi d'Ys*).

Between 1972 and 1988 he created over fifty new opera productions in France and abroad, working in some of Europe's most prestigious houses. Was closely associated with Basle in Switzerland for some years. Recent new productions include *Manon* in Houston, *Gioconda* in the Arena di Verona, *Traviata* in Toulouse, *Fidelio* in Orange, Monteverdi's *Ulysses* in Lausanne and *Tristan* in Nantes.



LURETTA BYBEE

Mezzo-Soprano (USA): Carmen

Since 1986 has sung many seasons as Carmen in Peter Brook's *La Tragédie de Carmen* in America, Japan, Israel, Europe, Australia and Hawaii. Other roles include Falliero (Rossini's *Bianca e Falliero*) for Greater Miami Opera, Maddalena (*Rigoletto*) in New Orleans, Dorothee (*Cendrillon*) for Washington Opera, the Page in *Salomé* for Kentucky Opera, Isabella in Rossini's *L'Italiana in Algieri* replacing Agnes Baltsa at the Santander Festival in Spain last year, followed by the same role for Cologne Opera. Has just sung Farnace in Mozart's *Mitridate* at Wexford.



BRENDAN CAVANAGH

Tenor (Ireland): Dancairo

Has had a very happy relationship over the years with the DGOS for whom he has performed a wide variety of roles. Has just returned from a concert tour in the USA, singing to large audiences in the mid-west. Has also been a frequent performer at the Wexford Festival. Earlier this year, sang in the enormously successful Opera Theatre Company production of Haydn's *Country Matters* (*L'infedelta Delusa*).

SUSAN DANIEL

Mezzo-Soprano (UK): Mercédes and Flora

Graduated from the Royal College of Music London, then completed her studies in Paris and Milan. Professional debut with English Music Theatre, then engaged by the Staatstheater Basel where roles included Charlotte (*Werther*), Sesto (*Giulio Cesare*), Dorabella, Cenerentola and Melisande. Joined the Bayerische Staatsoper and sang Rosina, Dorabella, Cenerentola, etc. in Munich. Was invited by Loren Maazel to repeat these roles at the Vienna State Opera as well as to appear with Plácido Domingo in the film version of *Carmen*. Has sung Marguerite (*Damnation of Faust*) at Deutsche Oper Berlin and the title-role in *La Belle Hélène* at the Paris Opera.

FRANCIS EGERTON

Tenor (Ireland): Remendado and Gaston

Born in Limerick. Since 1972 has appeared regularly at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden in a very wide range of roles including Flute (*Midsummer Night's Dream*), the Captain (*Wozzeck*) and Beppe (*I Pagliacci*). Roles sung for Scottish Opera include the Witch (*Hansel and Gretel*) and Mime (*Siegfried*); for Glyndebourne, Monostatos (*Magic Flute*) and Bardolfo (*Falstaff*); for Los Angeles, Bardolfo, the Captain and John Styx in *Orphée aux Enfers*. Other roles have taken him to San Francisco, Monte Carlo, Drottningholm, Brussels, Nice, Paris, etc. Just back from singing Remendado in Japan.

BRIAN HARRIS

Lighting Designer

His theatre credits are headed by a list of more than fifty productions lit for the Royal Shakespeare Company. Other companies: Edinburgh Festival, Liverpool Everyman, Birmingham Rep, Northern Ballet, New Israeli Opera, Moscow Classical Ballet, Aarhus Theatre Denmark, plus theatres throughout Britain and in London's West End.

ARTISTS' PROFILES

KAREN HUFFSTODT

Soprano (USA): Violetta

Born in Illinois. Made her New York City Opera debut 1982 in the title role of *The Merry Widow*, returning the following season to sing Micaëla and Violetta. Her career progressed swiftly throughout U.S.A. and Europe, with roles such as Donna Anna, the Countess, Violetta, Musetta, Konstanze and Rosalinda performed in the major houses of Houston, Chicago, Washington, Los Angeles, Zurich, Cologne, Hamburg, Vienna, Frankfurt, the Paris Opera, Opera des Champs Elysées, etc. Has just made her debut at the Metropolitan Opera House New York as Violetta: also sings Rosalinda (*Fledermaus*) there this season.



MICHAEL HUNT

Producer, *La Traviata*

Was for many years attached to English National Opera for whom he directed *Aida*, a touring *Madam Butterfly* and revivals of *Orpheus in the Underworld* and *Julius Caesar*. Prior to this was Artistic Director of the Cheltenham Arts Centre. Other work in opera has included productions for Opera North, Scottish Opera, and the Kensington, Cheltenham, Harrogate and Wexford Festivals. Was Artistic Director for the highly successful 1988 Bloomsbury Festival. Recently directed Rossini's *Tancredi* in Las Palmas; plans to return to Spain for *Otello* and *Norma* in 1990.



MARIETTE KEMMER

Soprano (Luxemburg): Micaëla

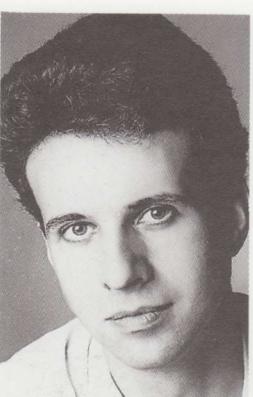
Studied singing and cello at Luxemburg Conservatoire and later in Düsseldorf. Went to the Opera Studio of the Theatre Royal de la Monnaie in Brussels, singing many roles at the theatre, including Sophie (*Der Rosenkavalier*), Melisande, Pamina, Micaëla and the Countess (*Le Nozze di Figaro*), Olympia, Antonia, Giulietta and Stella (*Les Contes d'Hoffmann*), Mimi, Liu and the Countess (*Capriccio*). Guest appearances have taken her to the Vienna Staatsoper, Munich, Hamburg, Zurich, Geneva, Basle, Berne, Lausanne, Nice, Nancy, Nantes, Montpellier, Strasbourg, Liège and the Festivals of Aix-en-Provence and Bregenz. Engagements in 1989/90 include the Countess in Nancy, Marguerite in Rennes and Angers and *Elijah* for Radio France in Paris.



DIMITRI KHARITONOV

Baritone (U.S.S.R.): Germont Père

Studied at Leningrad and Odessa State Conservatories. Winner of many prizes, including Grand Prix Verviers in Belgium, Gold Medal in the Bastianini Competition in Siena, the Voci Verdiane Competition in Bussetto, and the Arena di Verona Competition for all winners of international competitions. In 1984, became principal baritone of Odessa State Opera; in 1985, principal baritone at the Bolshoi Opera Moscow where roles included Germont, Figaro (*Barbiere*), Onegin, Mazeppa, di Luna (*Trovatore*), Tsar Soltan, etc. Became a UK resident in 1989, made Edinburgh Festival debut as Jokanaan (*Salomé*), sang Germont in Liège, Belgium. Next year sings for English National Opera, Covent Garden, Chicago Lyric Opera.



PETER LOEHL

Bass (USA): Zuniga and Baron Douphol

Studied philosophy and theology before pursuing an international singing career. In both 1982 and 1986 reached semi-finals of the International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow and won the Russian Art Song section. This year won the Loren Zachary Society National Vocal Competition in Los Angeles. Roles include Basilio, Masetto, King and Ramphus in *Aida*, Sparafucile and Sarastro with companies including Kentucky, Baltimore Buffaloes and Spoleto. Comes direct from Wexford where he sang Beaumanoir in Marschner's *Der Templer und die Jüdin*.

REGINA NATHAN

Soprano (Ireland): Frasquita

Studied at the College of Music, Dublin, N.U.I. (Maynooth), Trinity College of Music and the National Opera Studio London. Roles in London have included Susanna (*Figaro*) and Monica (*The Medium*), and Micaëla in Opera Theatre Company's production of *Carmen* in Dublin and Irish tour 1988. Recent recitals: summer concert for Friends of the Wexford Festival, Bank of Ireland series in the House of Lords Dublin, 'Young Ireland' at Wexford Festival. Wigmore Hall debut recital, January 15th 1990.

STEVEN NAYLOR

Repetiteur, *Carmen*

Studied music at University College Cardiff, Royal Academy of Music and National Opera Studio, London. Repetiteur and prize-winning accompanist. Operatic work includes Cambridge Touring Opera, Pavilion Opera, Kent Opera and the Festivals of Buxton, Aldeburgh and Wexford. Played for this year's DGOS *Norma* and recently worked on Henze's *The English Cat* in association with the composer at Gütersloh, Germany.

FRANK O'BRIEN

Baritone (Ireland): Morales and Marquis

Has been a guest soloist with the DGOS for many years and has won critical acclaim for such roles as the Father (*Hansel and Gretel*), Rodrigo (*Don Carlos*), Figaro (*Barbiere*), Sharpless (*Madama Butterfly*) and Guglielmo (*Cosi Fan Tutte*), which was televised in 1985. He also sang several roles with Cork City Opera and Irish National Opera. Has appeared many times on television and broadcasts regularly with the RTE Orchestra. Has also performed concerts in London and America.

ARTISTS' PROFILES

SYLVIA O'REGAN

Mezzo-Soprano (Ireland): Annina

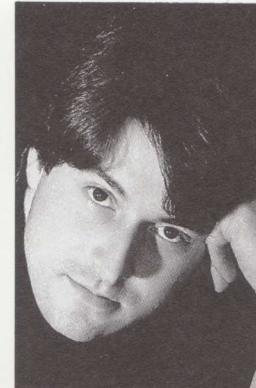
Studied music and English at U.C.D. where she graduated in 1984, then decided to pursue a singing career. Now studies at the College of Music, Dublin, with Evelyn Dowling and Clive Shannon. Has won the Mezzo Solo Award and the Milne Cup in the Dublin Feis Ceol and appears regularly in recitals and oratorios in Dublin. Was selected to appear in Ugo Benelli's Masterclass at this year's Wexford Festival. She is making her operatic debut as Annina with the DGOS.



TIM REED

Designer, *La Traviata*

Studied drama at Hull University. Made his designing debut at the 1977 Wexford Festival with an Italian triple-bill directed by Sesto Bruscantini, returning for six subsequent Festivals with various directors. Also has numerous DGOS credits. Other opera work includes Netherlands Opera, Hong Kong Festival, Opera Northern Ireland, Paris Opera, New Israeli Opera, Opera 80. Theatre credits include The Abbey, Belfast, Exeter, Nottingham, Leeds, Regents Park London, Hampstead Theatre Club and various German theatres.



DAVID PARRY

Conductor, *La Traviata*

Studied with Sergiu Celibidache and began his career as Sir John Pritchard's assistant at Glyndebourne. Made his debut with *Cenerentola* for English Music Theatre. Was a staff conductor at Dortmund City Opera and Opera North and was Music Director of Opera 80 from 1983-87. Has also appeared at English National Opera, Belgian National Opera and in Belfast, Reykjavik, San Sebastian, Aldeburgh and Batignano. Has made several acclaimed recordings for Opera Rara, including Donizetti's *Emilia di Liverpool* and *L'Assedio di Calais*.



BALAZS POKA

Baritone (Hungary): Escamillo

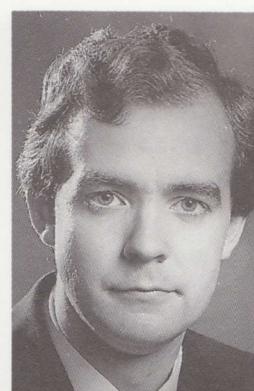
Graduated as a doctor in 1976, then became a member of the Hungarian State Opera, where his roles include Dandini (*La Cenerentola*), Figaro (*Barbiere*), Malatesta (*Don Pasquale*), the title-role in *Eugene Onegin*, Valentín (*Faust*), Silvio (*I Pagliacci*), Albert (*Werther*), di Luna (*Il Trovatore*), Posa (*Don Carlos*), Carlos (*La Forza del Destino*) and the title-role in *Prince Igor*. Appears regularly on radio and television and has a wide concert repertoire. Engagements abroad have taken him to West Germany, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Austria, Ireland (last year's Wexford Festival) and Italy. He has made many television films, and recordings include Schaunard in *La Bohème*.



PATRICK POWER

Tenor (New Zealand): Alfredo

Born in Wellington, New Zealand, of Irish parents. Studied at the University of Perugia in Italy. Became principal lyric tenor with Norwegian Opera in Oslo, at Gärtnerplatz Theatre in Munich, and also in Krefeld. Made Covent Garden debut in 1983 as The Simpleton in *Boris Godunov*. Has sung at Wexford (*Le Jongleur de Notre-Dame*, 1984), Glyndebourne, ENO, Scottish Opera, Opera North, Kent Opera, Opera Northern Ireland. Abroad he has sung in Cologne, Bonn, Copenhagen, Lyons, Paris, Montreal, Toronto, San Francisco, Pisa and Australia in roles including Tamino, Don Ottavio, Belmonte, Alfredo, Rodolfo, Almaviva, Fenton, Nadir, Faust, Comte Ory, etc. Sang with DGOS as Almaviva in *Barbiere* (1985).



ALBERT ROSEN

Conductor, *Carmen*

Former Chief Conductor of the Smetana Opera in Prague and holder of Chief Conductor positions in Dublin, Perth and Adelaide. Opera engagements have taken him to San Francisco, Strasbourg, Milan and Paris. He recently returned from his third successive season with English National Opera in London. Adding *Katya Kabanova* to his previous *Tosca* and *Christmas Eve* (Rimsky-Korsakoff). This year's Wexford Festival at which he conducted Marschner's *Der Templer und die Jüdin* was his fifteenth appearance at the Festival. *Carmen* marks his twenty-third season with the DGOS.

JIMMY VAUGHAN

Repetiteur, *La Traviata*

Graduate of Trinity College Dublin and a fellow of Trinity College London. Studied in Siena and Rome on Italian Government scholarships; currently studying an opera course at The Vienna Hochschule. As accompanist has already worked with most of Ireland's leading singers and instrumentalists; has received acclaim for his partnership with Bernadette Greevy. Was recently official accompanist to Sena Jurinac masterclasses in London.

NIGEL WILLIAMS

Bass (Ireland): Dr. Grenvil

Born in Roscrea, County Tipperary in 1962. Studied at Trinity College Dublin, Dublin College of Music, Royal College of Music London. Winner of the 1987 Lombard and Ulster Music Foundation Award — at £15,000 one of Europe's largest music prizes. Has appeared with most of the major Irish choral societies, given many recitals, broadcast on radio and TV and appeared in previous seasons with the DGOS. Made his British operatic debut in 1988 at the Aldeburgh Festival in Tchaikovsky's *Ioanata*. Broadcasts in Britain include 'Friday Night is Music Night' for BBC Radio 2.

RTE CONCERT ORCHESTRA

1ST VIOLINS

Alan Smale (Leader)
Michael Healy (Co Leader)
Mircea Petcu
Patrick Fitzgerald Mooney
Pamela Forde
Debby Ellis
Kathy Smale
Sheila O'Grady

BASSOONS

John Leonard
Carole Block

2ND VIOLINS

Arthur McIver
Donal Roche
Fionnuala Shery
Patricia Higgins
Eileen Kohlmann

HORNS

David Carmody
Raymond Cavanagh
Ferghal O Ceallachain
Brian Jack

VIOLAS

Padraig O'Connor
Ruth Mann
Charles Maguire
John S. Kelly

TRUMPETS

Benny McNeill
Davy Martin
Eoin Daly

CELLOS

David James
Catherine Behan
Moya O'Grady

TROMBONES

David Weakley
John Tate
Patrick Kennedy

BASSES

Martin Walsh
Joe Czibi Jnr.

TUBA

Niall Doyle

FLUTES

Elizabeth Gaffney
Kate Chisholm

TIMPANI

John Fennessy

OBOES

Peter Healy
David Agnew

PERCUSSION

Richard O'Donnell
Tony Kavanagh

CLARINETS

John Finucane
Jean Lechmar

HARP

Ann Jones

LIBRARIAN

Simon Clyne

ORCHESTRAL ASSISTANTS

Colm Hanlon
Danny McDonnell

ORCHESTRA MANAGER

Victor Malirsh

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| Brady Nancy Miss | Clarke Ita Miss | Cunnane Veronica Mrs. | Dunn Edwin Ms. |
| Branigan Adeline Mrs. | Clarke Mairead Mrs. | Cunningham Dolores Mrs. | Dunne Thomas Mr. |
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| Brennan Eddie Mrs. | Clarkson W. J. Mr. | Cusack Desmond Mr. | |
| Brennan Gabriel Mr. | Cleeve H. J. Mrs. | Cussen Robert Mr. | |
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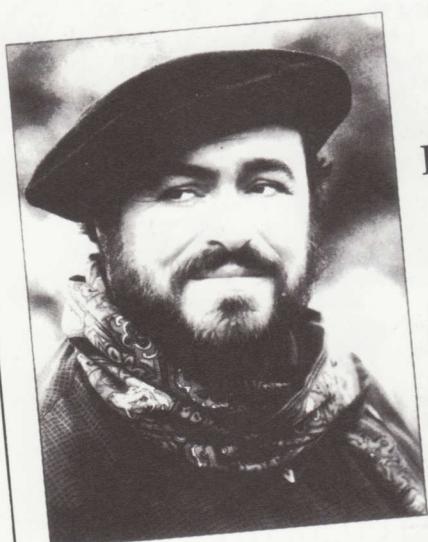
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General Information: Smoking is prohibited in the auditorium. Glasses and bottles may not be brought into the auditorium. The use of cameras and tape recorders is prohibited.

Kiosk: The Gaiety Kiosk is situated in the foyer and is open before the performance and during the interval. The kiosk stocks minerals and confectionery.

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